

Message Text

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SUBJECT: GREEK-EC PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE MEETING ENDS WITH
STRONG SUPPORT FOR GREEK EC ACCESSION

REF: ATHENS 4528

1. THE 13TH MIXED GREEK-EX PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE MEETING
WAS HELD LAST WEEK ON THE ISLAND OF LESVOS. DISCUSSIONS
CENTERED AROUND DEVELOPMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE NEGOTIATIONS
FOR GREECE'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE EC AND CONCLUDED BY UNDERLINING
THE COMMITMENT TO GREECE'S EARLY ENTRY AS A FULL MEMBER.
CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE MIXED COMMITTEE WILLY DE CLERCQ REITERATED
THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITH GREECE SHOULD PROCEED INDEPENDENTLY
FROM THOSE OF OTHER APPLICANTS, AND THAT NEITHER CYPRUS NOR
GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS WOULD AFFECT GREECE'S ENTRY.

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2. JOHN PEMMAZOGLOU, PRESIDENT OF THE GREEK PARLIAMENTARY
GROUP, REGRETTED THAT PARTIAL FREEZING OF THE 1962 ASSOCIATION
AGREEMENT DURING THE JUNTA PERIOD HAD SLOWED PROGRESS ON
HARMONIZATION PARTICULARLY IN THE AGRICULTURAL FIELD, AND
REITERATED HIS VIEWS THAT GREECE'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON ENTRY INTO
THE EC. COORDINATION MINISTER PAPALIGOURAS, REFERRING ALSO TO
THE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT, SAID GREECE'S SPECIAL AND UNIQUE

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EC SINCE 1962 SHOULD GIVE ITS APPLICATION PRIORITY. COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT NATALI, WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE CONFERENCE AFTER DISCUSSIONS IN ATHENS WITH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS, WAS MORE CAUTIOUS IN HIS REMARKS, SAYING THAT EC ENLARGEMENT POSES MANY PROBLEMS, EACH OF WHICH SHOULD BE TACKLED SEPARATELY BUT NOT IN ISOLATION.

3. ACCORDING TO THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE, THE COMMITTEE:

A. RECOMMENDS RAPID COMPLETION F THE GREECE-EC ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS WITH A FIVE-YEAR TRANSITION PERIOD;

B. BELIEVES THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH GREECE SHOULD BE CONDUCTED SEPARATELY, ON THEIR OWN MERITS;

C. FEELS THAT, DESPITE REACTIVATION OF THE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT AFTER GREECE'S RETURN TO DEMOCRACY, CERTAIN GOALS, PARTICULARLY IN THE HARMONIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY, HAVE NOT YET BEEN ACHIEVED;

D. REAFFIRMS THAT GREECE'S ADMISSION TO THE EC WILL GIVE THE COMMUNITY A NEW IMPETUS AND STRENGTH.

4. COMMENT: THE GOG, WHICH CONSIDERS IT A POLITICAL IMPERATIVE TO CONCLUDE THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR UC ACCESSION RAPIDLY AND INDEPENDENTLY OF OTHER APPLICANTS, HAS BEEN PRESSING FOR "COMMITMENTS IN PRINCIPLE" ON ALL FRONTS. DURING HIS MEETINGS WITH EC LEADERS IN LONDON DURING THE NATO SUMMIT AND IN HIS MEETING IN PARIS WITH THE FRENCH PRESIDENT (REFTEL), PRIME LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MINISTER CARAMANLIS CLAIMED TO HAVE OBTAINED ASSURANCES ALONG THESE LINES. HE WILL MOST LIKELY ALSO PRESS ITALIAN PRESIDENT ANDREOTTI FOR A FAVORABLE STATEMENT DURING THE LATTER'S MAY 23-25 VISIT TO ATHENS. THUS, EVEN THOUGH THE MIXED PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE IS NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS, THE GOG CAN BE SATISFIED WITH THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE, WHICH EXPLICITLY ENDORSED ITS POSITIONS IN YET ANOTHER FORUM.

5. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, OFFICIALS OF THE COMMISSION AND THE COUNCIL AND PARLIAMENT SECRETARIES WITH WHOM WE SPOKE WHEN THEY TRANSITED ATHENS EN ROUTE TO LESVOS, TOLD US THERE WAS A GROWING FEELING IN BRUSSELS THAT THE COMMISSION HAD BEEN RIGHT IN THE CAUTIOUS POSITION IT TOOK IN ITS OPINION ON THE GREEK APPLICATION LAST YEAR. THE RESULTS OF THE LEEDS CASTLE EC-9 FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING ALSO SUGGEST THAT PERHAPS GREEK MEMBERSHIP MAY COME LATER THAN THE GREEKS HOPE.
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